# Is having a point of differentiation enough?

Last night, I met a friend for dinner. He chose a Thai place that was half-way between his place and mine. Upon reading some reviews online, I found out that this is the only Thai place  in the area that's Halal, that is, observes Muslim dietary rules.

When I got there last night, it was empty save for a couple of people. Few people came in until a outwardly observant Muslim family came in. When they were done eating and had left, the owner pretty much closed up shop and kicked my friend and me out. From the time we had arrived at 6:30 p.m. until we left, no more than ten other customers had been in the restaurant.

The food at this Thai place was not very good. In fact, it was mediocre. It wasn't spicy enough, or attractively presented enough or even interesting enough. They did not have Thai standards like green papaya salad or red curry. Based on the food alone, I would not go back.

The only relevant differentiator this Thai restaurant offers is that it's Halal. Is that enough? **Can you have one strong point of differentiation and have that keep your business alive? Well, the answer is yes, but there is an "if" attached.** In this case, you could have Halal as your point of differentiation ONLY IF your food is on par with other similar restaurants.

In a world where there are multiple offerings for everything (many organic grocery stores, tons of sushi restaurants, hundreds of nail salons), **you have to meet the standard or exceed it AND then find your point of differentiation.** For example, if you have a nail salon, not only do have to comply with sanitary guidelines required by law, but you should find

something that your competition does not have (the most colors, the most comfortable chairs, etc.).

What do you think? Is having a point of differentiation enough?